

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 191566

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ORIGIN AF-18

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 SCCT-02 SS-20 PA-04 PRS-01

USIE-00 EB-11 COME-00 SCA-01 SSO-00 NSC-07 NSCE-00

SP-03 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 INRE-00 /094 R

DRAFTED BY AF/E:RSBARRETT:JR

APPROVED BY AF/E:RSBARRETT

AF - MR. MULCAHY

AF/P - MR. LINEHAN

S/CCT - MR. GATCH

S/S - MR. MOFFAT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL ASMARA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 191566

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINDS, CASC, ET, LE

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON TENNECO FOUR

THE FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR USE  
ON AN IF ASKED BASIS IN THE EVENT THAT THE HOSTAGES  
ARE RELEASED AT AN EARLY DATE.

QUOTE:

QUESTION: IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED THAT THE TENNECO  
HOSTAGES HAVE BEEN FREED. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT?

ANSWER: WE NATURALLY ARE PLEASED AT THIS DEVELOPMENT.  
WE ARE GRATIFIED THAT THESE INNOCENT MEN, WHO HAVE BEEN  
HELD SINCE LAST MARCH, HAVE BEEN RELEASED BY THEIR  
CAPTORS, THE ERITREAN LIBERATION FRONT (ELF).

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PAGE 02 STATE 191566

THE FOUR HOSTAGES WERE FREED AFTER EXTENSIVE NEGOTIATIONS. THE FINAL AGREEMENT WAS WORKED OUT IN DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE ELF AND THE TENNECO OIL COMPANY.

QUESTION: DID THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAVE ANY ROLE IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS?

ANSWER: THREE OF THE HOSTAGES ARE AMERICANS, THE OTHER IS A CANADIAN. THROUGHOUT THE LONG AND SENSITIVE

NEGOTIATIONS, WE WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE ETHIOPIAN AND CANADIAN GOVERNMENTS AND THE TENNECO OIL COMPANY TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES.

QUESTION: WHAT WERE THE CONDITIONS FOR THE RELEASE? WAS RANSOM PAID?

ANSWER: AS I SAID EARLIER, THE FINAL AGREEMENT FOR THE RELEASE OF THE FOUR HOSTAGES WAS WORKED OUT IN DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN TENNECO AND THE ELF. I SUGGEST THAT YOU ASK TENNECO FOR THE ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS.

QUESTION: WHAT WAS THE SUBSTANCE OF U.S. TALKS WITH ETHIOPIA ON THIS MATTER?

ANSWER: I AM NOT AT LIBERTY TO DIVULGE THE SUBSTANCE OF SUCH TALKS.

QUESTION: DID THE U.S. DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE ELF? IF NOT, HOW WERE THE NEGOTIATIONS CONDUCTED?

ANSWER: WE DID NOT MEET DIRECTLY WITH THE ELF. I CANNOT REVEAL THE CHANNELS USED BY THE VARIOUS PARTIES. TENNECO DID MEET DIRECTLY WITH THE ELF.

QUESTION: WHERE WERE THE NEGOTIATIONS HELD?

ANSWER: THE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS WERE REACHED IN BEIRUT.  
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PAGE 03 STATE 191566

QUESTION: WHERE ELSE?

ANSWER: I CANNOT MAKE ANY FURTHER COMMENT ON THAT.

QUESTION: WHY ARE THE HOSTAGES BEING RELEASED IN THE SUDAN.

ANSWER: THE SUDAN HAS A COMMON FRONTIER WITH ERITREA,  
THE ETHIOPIAN PROVINCE IN WHICH THE ELF OPERATES.  
THIS IS VERY DIFFICULT TERRAIN, AND WE CAN ONLY ASSUME  
THAT WAS THE BEST WAY TO GET THEM OUT.

QUESTION: WHAT IS TENNECO?

ANSWER: A COMPANY BASED IN TEXAS WHICH IS PROSPECTING  
FOR OIL AND OTHER MINERALS IN ETHIOPIA. UNQUOTE

FYI: FREEMAN INFORMS US THAT TENNECO WILL ANSWER  
QUERIES BY SAYING (A) NO RANSOM WAS PAID AND (B) IT  
WOULD NOT DIVULGE THE CONDITIONS FOR THE RELEASE.  
END FYI. KISSINGER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** TENNECO FOUR, PRISONERS RELEASE, NEGOTIATIONS, PRESS CONFERENCES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 30 AUG 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** martinml  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974STATE191566  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** RSBARRETT:JR  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740241-0696  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t1974083/aaaaabwe.tel  
**Line Count:** 129  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ORIGIN AF  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** martinml  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 26 AUG 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <26 AUG 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <05 MAR 2003 by martinml>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRESS GUIDANCE ON TENNECO FOUR THE FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR USE  
**TAGS:** PINS, CASC, ET, LE, TENNECO, ELF  
**To:** ADDIS ABABA MULTIPLE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005